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HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY & HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT OF
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JOINT TASK FORCE NORTH
BEFORE THE HOUSE GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, DRUG POLICY & HUMAN RESOURCES

10 May 2005

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Chairman Souder, Ranking Member Cummings, and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify regarding U.S. Northern Command's (USNORTHCOM) efforts to support civilian law enforcement agencies in the fight against drug trafficking and other transnational threats. Support to law enforcement is an important element in USNORTHCOM's mission to deter, prevent, defeat, and mitigate threats to the homeland, because it has direct applicability to the Global War on Terror (GWOT). The FY04 National Defense Authorization Act authorizes Department of Defense counterdrug task forces, such as Joint Task Force North, to support civilian law enforcement agencies conducting counterterrorism activities. As we broaden our focus, we assist many federal, state, and local agencies to enhance national security and defend America.

Transnational threats include international terrorism, narcotics trafficking, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and organized crime. Terrorists are known to use drug trafficking conveyances, smuggling networks, and money laundering to achieve their goals and fund their activities. As USNORTHCOM supports law enforcement agencies in the fight against drugs, we want to focus our efforts on the nexus between terrorist organizations and drug trafficking. USNORTHCOM supports the global war on terrorism right here at home by providing military unique capabilities to support civilian law enforcement agencies. By doing this, we support not only the National Defense Strategy with terrorist interdiction support, but also the National Drug Control Strategy, by simultaneously providing drug interdiction support.

My prepared testimony will address two areas: (1) how U.S. Northern Command is organized and funded to conduct support to civilian law enforcement, and (2) how U.S. Northern Command enhances joint interagency cooperation.

U.S. Northern Command's law enforcement support operations consist of several major components. The first is headquarters operations for USNORTHCOM (Project Code 5110). This consists of the activities necessary to plan, coordinate, and monitor execution of counterdrug support activities, such as developing strategies and plans, coordinating with the Joint Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense, law enforcement and other agencies, and our partner nations.

The lynchpin of USNORTHCOM's counterdrug efforts is the support provided by Joint Task Force North. Established in 1989 as JTF-6, JTF-North was transformed and re-designated as JTF-North in September 2004. The mission of JTF-North is to coordinate military support to law enforcement and enhance interagency synchronization in order to deter and prevent threats from entering the homeland. Its area of operations runs from border to border and coast to coast, but focuses on the approaches to the homeland.

Within the current program-budget, FY06 funding for JTF-North activities is approximately \$10.3 million (Project Code 5111). This consists of Military Support to Civilian Law Enforcement Agencies throughout CONUS in support of the National Defense Strategy and Homeland Security Strategy to combat terrorism, as well as the National Drug Control Strategy. This support includes more than 50 different missions that can be broadly grouped into three categories: (1) Intelligence Support, (2) Operational Support, and (3) Theater Security Cooperation.

Intelligence support includes employing military intelligence analysts to develop operational intelligence products that can be used across the interagency for early cuing, warning, and interdiction operations. A supporting effort is training and collaboration between DOD and law enforcement intelligence analysts, consistent with intelligence oversight requirements, to ensure seamless coverage within the operating area. JTF-North has intelligence liaison personnel with the El Paso Intelligence Center, Border Patrol Field Intelligence Center, and most notably, at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. These intelligence professionals provide a real-time link between JTF-North and key centers of intelligence in North America in order to develop situational awareness for early cueing and warning. Most recently, our intelligence personnel have been preparing products in support of Operation WINTER FREEZE and the Arizona Border Control Initiative, which supports detection, and deterrence of cross-border illicit trafficking. They work hand-in-hand with their law enforcement counterparts, fostering a mutually supporting relationship.

Operational support includes detection missions using a variety of sensors that are unique to the DOD in order to improve a supported law enforcement agency's ability to detect, monitor, and interdict transnational threats. Construction of roads, bridges, and fences as well as installing area lighting to

improve the ability of law enforcement officers to move, identify, and respond to threats crossing the border are also a part of this mission category.

In addition to assisting the law enforcement agencies that request such support, JTF-North's operational and intelligence support missions provide military training opportunities for the Title 10 and National Guard forces that conduct them. JTF-North recruits units to volunteer for these missions, soliciting forces from all services, both active and reserve components. Unit commanders volunteer because of the realistic training opportunity and gratification from conducting a homeland defense mission.

The third JTF-North mission category, Theater Security Cooperation, made significant progress with Mexico last year through the export of a Maritime Basic Intelligence Course to the Mexican Navy. This effort was in addition to JTF-North's continuing membership in the U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Interdiction Working Group.

Our relationship with Canada is developing and strengthens with each collaborative engagement as part of our work with the Integrated Border Enforcement and Intelligence Teams. JTF-North also performs cooperative efforts with Canada through Project NORTHSTAR.

U.S. Northern Command is particularly proud of its efforts in cooperation with Mexico. These include counterdrug personnel in the Office of Defense Cooperation, with FY06 funding of \$245 thousand (Project Code 5112). A substantial element of our Theater Security Cooperation efforts is the conduct of Mobile Training Teams with FY06 funding of approximately \$2.4 million (Project Code 9203). These teams assist the Mexican military with tasks such as maintenance, training, and repairs on equipment such as aircraft, night vision equipment, counterdrug sensor packages, and ex-Knox class frigates.

Another USNORTHCOM effort is support to the Air and Marine Operations Center. With FY06 funding of approximately \$2 million (Project Code 9499), this consists of Air National Guard radar surveillance operators to provide detection and tracking data and forward to law enforcement agencies air tracks suspected of smuggling activities across U.S. borders.

I would like to emphasize that in most of USNORTHCOM's support activities we are not the primary federal agency; our job is to support civilian law enforcement agencies based on the support requested. We believe that our relationships with our interagency partners are excellent and growing. An important element in these relationships is JTF-North as USNORTHCOM's agent for coordination with border-focused civilian agencies. With a 15-year track record of success, and expanded mission into an organization focused on all transnational threats, it is postured to take the next step with increased interagency collaboration to secure the Nation.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to describe USNORTHCOM's support activities with regard to interdicting terrorists and drug traffickers. We are proud of the efforts of our men and women in military uniform, civilian employees, and our civilian law enforcement partners, working together to protect our borders against drug trafficking and other transnational threats to our nation.